

immigrants and the exploits of the much-decorated but segregated 100/442nd Regimental ("Go for Broke") Combat Team. That the Nisei soldiers who volunteered for or were drafted into the Army had much to do with the greater tolerance enjoyed by Japanese Americans following the war is now widely acknowledged. The book reminds all of the extraordinary sacrifices and accomplishments of these men and women, many of whose mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, and brothers were made refugees and prisoners in their own country.

One who seeks to be informed about the history of Japanese Americans will not be satisfied with the brief notes and with the chronology of events, though the latter is more detailed than chronologies found in most books. For a complete historical understanding of the Japanese-American experience and even of the internment, one must seek other sources. The primary value of this book is to remind us of what happened to a vulnerable minority in the days, months, and years following Pearl Harbor.

—Victor N. Okada  
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

**Pontheolla T. Williams. *Robert Hayden: A Critical Analysis of His Poetry*. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987) xviii, 241 pp., \$21.95.**

Pontheolla Williams' book is fairly straightforward. Because Hayden's life is not well-known, she provides a thirty-five page biography before examining Hayden's work in chronological order generally giving each volume a separate chapter. She includes a bibliography of Hayden's work and of the secondary material she used, notes, several of the major poems she studies, a chronology of Hayden's life, another of his poetry, and an index. All of these, especially the two chronologies, will help the person wanting to study Hayden.

For Williams the approach is effective. The brief biography focuses on those factors which most affected his poetic career: his ambivalent attitude toward his adoptive parents and his natural mother, the depression and college years in which he studied the major poets in the Euro-American tradition, his adoption of the Baha'i faith, the years spent teaching at Fisk and trying to find time to write, Southern racial attitudes and history, and what might be called the years of success as a member of the University of Michigan faculty and poetry consultant to the Library of Congress.

The chronological approach to Hayden's poetry permits Williams to trace the development of themes and techniques and to consider

Hayden's frequent revisions of material. For the reader of *Explorations*, two considerations seem the most important. First is the relationship between art and ethnic identity. Williams makes much of Hayden studying with W. H. Auden and reading Yeats, Hopkins, Eliot, and others. Apparently taking her cue from numerous interviews with Hayden, she emphasizes the idea that "poetry transcends time and place," and asserts that "Hayden did not reject his cultural or racial identity. On the contrary, he openly embraced it, but as an American, rather than simply a black writer; he transcended mere rhetorical discourse, whether racial or political, in order to comprehend the meaning of his environment in terms of his art." Her position, frequently reflected in specific analyses, is that Hayden is too racial for mainstream critics and not racial enough for Afro-American critics.

Readers of *Explorations* should also find Williams' analyses of Hayden's poems about the South and about Mexico interesting. "A Ballad of Remembrance," "Middle Passage," "The Ballad of Nat Turner," "Frederick Douglass," and "Runagate Runagate" are certainly among Hayden's best-known poems, and Williams' analyses are helpful. The poems about Mexico result from two extended visits in the mid-1950s and are not known nearly so well. One can hope Williams' discussions will give them the wider currency they deserve.

The poetry of Robert Hayden probably is not studied as much as it deserves to be; most of us know only those few poems reprinted in anthologies and have never been led to see his work as a whole. This study of Hayden's poetry and the biography Williams is now working on may change that.

—James L. Gray  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania